

POROVISCOHYPERELASTIC COMPUTATIONAL MODELS OF SOFT BIOLOGICAL TISSUE

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MINI-SYMPOSIUM PROPOSAL

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There is increasing evidence that the deformations of soft biological tissues such as cardiac muscle, the white and grey matter in the brain, and various types of tumors cannot be studied independently of the interstitial fluid motion intimately coupled to these structures. Theoretical investigation and computer simulations represent valuable tools to better understand the interplay of mechanical deformations coupled with interstitial fluid motion. The insight gained with these methods is also helpful to guide the experimental approach, for example by designing more efficient experimental tests for the verification of scientific hypotheses on the complex behavior of soft tissue.

Computational models have been adopted to investigate many fundamental problems of soft tissue mechanics. In cardiac mechanics, the complex interaction of electric signals, heart muscle contraction and its perfusion has been successfully explored using a poroelastic model for heart tissue [1, 2]. Similar models turned out to be effective for fluid-porous-structure interaction simulations of large arteries [3-6].

Another problem that poses fundamental challenges is the understanding of brain mechanics [7]. The importance of this organ and the relevance of its pathologies have motivated the development of new theoretical models [8] and advanced numerical methods [9].

In some cases, such as brain development and tumors, the complexity of the problem is increased by the fact that the material is subject to growth. The theoretical investigation of solid and fluid mechanics coupled to growth is an open challenge that has been addressed in few works [10-14].

This mini-symposium aims to explore these trends in soft tissue mechanics, by gathering researchers active on non-standard constitutive frameworks (poroelasticity, poroviscoelasticity, etc.) applied to model the behavior of soft biological tissues. The scope of the mini-symposium focuses on (but is not limited to) applications to brain tissue, cardiovascular tissues, and cancer. Contributions from the theoretical, computational, and experimental standpoints will be welcome in this mini-symposium.

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